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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/560,044	12/08/2005	Takehiko Tojo	281680US3PCT	9436
22850	7590	09/04/2008	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.			RUNNING, RACHEL A	
1940 DUKE STREET			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314			3732	
NOTIFICATION DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
09/04/2008		ELECTRONIC		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/560,044	TOJO ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	RACHEL A. RUNNING	3732	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 May 2008.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1 and 316 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) 4,6 and 10-13 is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1, 3,5,7-9 and 14-16 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
- Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
- Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 6/9/2008.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application

6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Terminal Disclaimer

1. The terminal disclaimer filed on February 13, 2008 disclaiming the terminal portion of any patent granted on this application which would extend beyond the expiration date of Patent 7,305,995 has been reviewed and is accepted. The terminal disclaimer has been recorded.

Priority

2. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

3. It appears that Japan 2004-015222 is the Japanese patent application of US 10/560,044. Japan 2004-008099 does not appear to be related to application 10/560,044 therefore it will not receive the foreign priority date 1/15/2004.

Election/Restrictions

4. This application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species

Species I, drawn to Figures 1 and 2.

Species II, drawn to Figures 3 and 4.

Species III, drawn to Figure 7.

5. The species are independent or distinct because claims to the different species recite the mutually exclusive characteristics of such species. In addition, these species are not obvious variants of each other based on the current record.

Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. Currently, claims 1-9, 14, and 15 are generic.

6. Applicant's election with traverse of Species I in the reply filed on May 22, 2008 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that all of the claims in the present invention would appear to be part of an overlapping field of search. This is not found persuasive because stated in MPEP 808.02 (c), a serious burden may be shown where it is necessary to search for one of the inventions in a manner that is not likely to result in finding art pertinent to the other inventions by having to search different classes or subclasses or employing different search inquires. A different field of search is shown in this instance because the holes in the hair device and the plurality of rectangular pieces would require a different search than without the holes or rectangular pieces.

7. Claims 4, 6, 10-13 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a nonelected Species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Applicant timely traversed the restriction (election) requirement in the reply filed on May 22, 2008.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. Claims 1, 3, 5, 7-9, and 14-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kobayashi et al. (PCT WO 03/00752).

Regarding claim 1, Kobayashi et al. disclose a hair holder comprising a flat tube having a sheet which forms a first side and a sheet which forms a second side to allow a hair bundle to be inserted from an opening at one end toward an opening at the other end. The sheet which forms the first side of the tube is more extensible in the length direction than the sheet which forms the second side of the tube and the sheet which forms the second side of the tube as a Taber stiffness of 0.4 mNm (see Figure 22). The sheet which forms the first side has a large number of openings to make the sheet extendable (see Figure 8). Regarding claim 5, the sheet is permeable to a hair treating agent. Regarding claim 7, the tube is designed to roll itself up into a prescribed shape.

Regarding claim 8, Kobayashi et al. disclose the method of treating hair including a flat tube having a sheet which forms a first side and a sheet which forms a second side the sheet which forms the first side of the tube is more extensible in the length direction of the tube than the sheet which forms the second side of the tube, the sheet

which forms the second side of the tube has a Taber stiffness of 0.4 mNm or higher, and the method includes inserting a hair bundle through the tube of the hair holder and rolling up the tube having the hair therein (see Figures 24a-24d). Regarding claim 16, the device has reinforcing strip in the hair holder (see Figures 17a and 17b).

Kobayashi et al. disclose the claimed invention except for the first side of the sheet having at least 15 times higher of an extension under a load of 5 N as of the second sheet, the sheet which forms the first side having an extension of at least 5% under a load of 5 N, the sheet which forms the second side has an extension of 5% or less under a load of 5 N, the sheet which forms the first side has the extensibility of at least 30 times the extensibility of the sheet which forms the second side under the load of 5 N.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have the first side of the sheet be at least 15 times higher of an extension under a load of 5 N than the second sheet, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233. It further would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have the sheet which forms the first side be an extension of at least 5% under a load of 5 N, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. *In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233. It further would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made

to have the sheet which forms the second side have an extension of 5% or less under a load of 5 N, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. In re Aller, 105 USPQ 233. It further would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to the sheet which forms the first side has the extensibility of at least 30 times the extensibility of the sheet which forms the second side under the load of 5 N, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art. In re Aller, 105 USPQ 233.

Response to Arguments

10. Applicant's arguments filed February 13, 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

11. In response to applicant's argument that Kobayashi does not disclose the sheet which forms the first side having an extensibility of at least 15 times an extensibility of the sheet which forms the second side under a load of 5 N, further Kobayashi does not provide any limits to the extensibility of either side, Kobayashi does state that "the tube may be formed by joining two extensible sheets along their longer sides" (page 11, paragraph 133 of English equivalent US2004/0231689), therefore since Kobayashi teaches that both the sheets can have extensibility and the general conditions of the claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges involves only routine skill in the art.

Conclusion

12. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to RACHEL A. RUNNING whose telephone number is (571)272-1917. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7:00 am - 4:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Cris Rodriguez can be reached on (571) 272-4964. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Robyn Doan/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3732

/Rachel A. Running/
Examiner
Art Unit 3732

8/19/2008